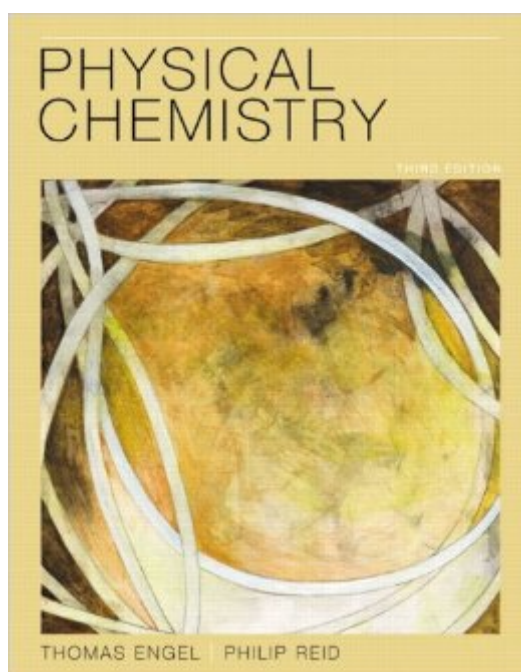


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Customer Reviews

When one peruses Engel's chapter headings, one gets the impression that he/she will get a clear, practical exposition of topics of use to the chem student, or working chemist. When reading through the text, this expectation is invariably dissatisfied. Topics are presented in an ad-hoc, haphazard manner, with no apparent unifying reason. Engel does have reasons for choosing the topics and examples he does, but I only knew what they were because I studied the same material in other sources. If you want to develop an intuitive sense for this material, and wish to think strategically and conceptually about how to solve these problems, you won't find much guidance here. The text comes off rather more like a hodgepodge of science trivia. Engel does present much valuable information, but his great weakness is his inability to distinguish a conceptual framework from the details of his exposition. In chapter two, for example he presents, out of the blue, a detailed discussion of the dependence of heat capacity on temperature, having not yet shown the role that heat capacity would play in solving energy conservation problems. One cannot help being misled, and ultimately wasting much time and effort in trying to apply concepts in a context where their application is inappropriate. In retrospect, Dr. Engel's text could be made much more effective were it re-written, with more emphasis given to conceptual development. In presenting a text, one must constantly have in mind the questions, what is my goal, and what tools am I developing to enable me to reach it. Engel seems not to have had these questions at the forefront. His text seems rather like a first draft, which could be significantly improved, were he to take a step back, and ask himself, "is this really understandable?" One of the best pieces of advice ever given to me came from my high school math teacher, who told us that whenever we solved some long problem, we need to then step back, and ask ourselves, "does my answer make sense?". In writing this text, Dr. Engel is attempting to answer the question "what does a student need to know about physical chemistry?" He needs to follow the advice of my high school math teacher, and now ask himself, "does my answer make sense?"

I've used half of the book now. The layout is not very organized. I found the graphical representations useful. ok, 2nd semester in work. I'd prefer to downgrade this rating to negative 5 if I could. This book has turned into a major disaster. It is so riddled with errors...the derivations are

never right. Everytime something doesn't work out right it's because the book is wrong. flat out. This book gets my strongest disapproval possible. Buying this book is throwing away your money. Thanks engel. Thanks for all those hours lost trying to figure out what mistake I had make working out the derivations in this book only to find the book was wrong all along. I'm still a little bitter about the false advertising when I got it...re: spartan software student copy that wasn't included.

I think this book was chosen because it offers both macroscopic (thermo) and microscopic (quantum) physical chemistry. It should be good for two semesters of physical chemistry... should be... This book was terrible for explaining everything. I have a strong physics background including taking the physics courses that would equate to both these courses using Carter and Townsend for thermo and quantum respectively. This book was just written at such a low level and organized so poorly there was really nothing it could be used for. It didn't explain material well and it surely did not organize material well. This is one of those books that I couldn't figure out what they were doing before they started writing down equations, and I only knew what was going on because I had done those derivations before. I strongly caution against using this book for anything. It's overpriced and absolutely useless.

terrible book, my pchem professor's notes are my go-to place for solving equations. i tried very hard to make use of this book and thoroughly read the first 8 chapters or so but it doesnt seem to speed up my studying at all. book totally sucks. i read and read for the first test and got an 86 on it, then i didnt even look at the book at all and just studied the lecture notes and did our problem set questions and got an 88 on the second test and it was harder material so i say screw the book! 99% of the equations and derivations in the book you'll never use. The solutions manual for this book is much more help than the book itself. so i'd say if your on a budget, buy the solutions manual before you buy the book. the solutions manual isnt great because it only has maybe 1/7th of the end of chapter problems but atleast its something you can look at and see how to do real problems. if your a mathematician and you love deriving formulas, then youll love the book, if your just trying to make it thru pchem then youll hate the book. oh, and the values for constants in the examples are not to be trusted! i lost points on a problem set because i used the surface tension constant for water directly from an example in the book and it was in newtons something and it was supposed to be in millinewtons something. so then i checked the tables at the end of the book and sure enough, different number than the example had! youd think people would proof read the examples, i guess not! have fun with pchem

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